

Richmond Dispatch.

THE CIRCULATION OF THE DISPATCH
IS LARGER THAN THE COMBINED CIRCULATION OF ALL THE OTHER DAILY NEWSPAPERS OF THE CITY.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 1879.

WEATHER REPORT.

INDICATIONS FOR TO-DAY.—For the Middle Atlantic States, southwest winds, slightly warmer, and partly cloudy or clear weather, stationary possibly followed by falling barometer.

The South Atlantic States, falling barometer, easterly winds, warmer, and partly cloudy weather.

THE WEATHER YESTERDAY: 6 A. M., 29.9; 9 A. M., 30.5; noon, 37; 3 P. M., 39; 6 P. M., 35; midnight, 29.

Mean temperature, 39.5-6.

LOCAL MATTERS.

Legislative Items.

STATEMENT FROM THE AUDITOR TO THE EFFECT THAT THE PRESENT REVENUE WILL PAY 7 PER CENT. INTEREST UPON THE DEBT PROPER—PUBLIC-PRINTING INVESTIGATION—CONVICTS ON CANAL, &c.

The following was read to the House yesterday:

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA,
OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS,
Richmond, January 10, 1879.

To the Hon. Henry C. Allen, Speaker of the House of Delegates:

Sir, I have received a resolution of your Honorable body, agreed to January 8, 1879, in the following words:

"Whereas there exists much doubt as to the amount of interest on the State debt the present rate of taxation will pay, nearly every member of the Assembly having his own peculiar method of figuring; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Auditor of Public Accounts be directed to report officially what amount of interest the present rate of taxation will pay."

In response thereto I beg leave to say that I am of opinion that from the best consideration I can give the subject, the present rate of taxation will yield a sufficient amount to pay four per centum interest upon the public debt proper, provided the present assessments of property can be maintained. It must be remembered, however, that a general reassessment of the lands of the Commonwealth will take place in the year 1880 (next year), and that the rate of taxation will be reduced, and the amount of interest on the State debt to twenty-five per centum upon the real estate. There will probably be none in the value of personal property. Should there be this depreciation in the value of land, and the debt be adjusted upon the basis of four per cent, the rate of interest, be made up either an increase in the rate of tax upon the reduced value of the land, or by the assessment of new subjects of taxation, which will yield the necessary amount of revenue. The reduction in legislative expenses by reason of biennial sessions, the reduction in the annual amount of criminal charges, the reform and re-employment policy inaugurated at the last session of the General Assembly, are all items which go far to confirm me in my opinion that four per cent, could be paid upon the debt proper—not forgetting, however, that it is all contingent upon maintaining present values, or upon an increased rate of tax should the values be reduced, or upon the assessment of new subjects of taxation, as I have above suggested.

I am, very respectfully,
WILLIAM F. TAYLOR,
Auditor Public Accounts.

PUBLIC PRINTING.

The joint Committee on Printing were in session again yesterday. Mr. Goode was on the stand. He will be further examined this evening.

THE CONVICTS' MORTALITY.

The committees of the two houses having charge of the subjects pertaining to prisons and convicts had a session in the Senate chamber last night—Senator W. D. Question in the chair, and completed the examination of witnesses as to the extraordinary mortality among the convicts employed on the canal last spring. About 10:30 the committees separated.

A session of the Senate committee followed immediately. There was some comparison of views, but it being apparent that time would be required to draft a report the committee adjourned to meet this morning.

"WEEK OF PRAYER" AT YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION HALL.—There was a still further increase in the attendance at the hall yesterday evening, and one of the most interesting meetings yet held.

The absence of Rev. J. Z. Taylor, who was desired by the committee, was regretted. Dr. Jenkins conducted the meeting, and made an admirable address. Earnest, practical, and effective remarks were made by Rev. Dr. Preston, Rev. George F. Williams, Rev. Dr. Duval, and Rev. Dr. J. E. Edwards.

Rev. Dr. Read, Rev. Dr. Edwards, and Dr. Jenkins were present. The meeting was a most successful one, and the prayer was a most successful one.

The meeting this evening—from 5 to 6—will be conducted by Rev. Dr. Preston, and the special topic will be "Missions Home and Foreign," that the world may be converted.

It will be decided this evening whether there will be special meetings and prayer next week for a general revival in the city.

PERSONAL.—Signor Giuseppe Emanuele Centaro, secretary of the Italian Minister at Rome, and wife are at present sojourning in this city. Signor Centaro was recently married at Livorno to Miss Ellen Hutchinson, a native of this city, and granddaughter of the late James Cassie, Esq., formerly president of the Bank of Virginia. They are now on their bridal tour, and will remain in Richmond for some time, being domiciled at the residence of John H. Williams, Esq., Linden Row, Grace street.

Mr. James B. Ezell, of Columbia, S. C., former of Richmond, was in the city yesterday, en route for Boston.

Mr. David, United States army, formerly of Richmond, is registered at the American Hotel.

Among the visitors to the Tobacco Exchange yesterday were A. C. Williams, North Carolina; R. H. Herndon, Danville; S. W. Jones, New York; H. W. Wilson, Petersburg; J. G. Gilks, New York; H. C. Nall, Memphis; George E. Taylor, Dargers's Springs; and Allen W. Magee, Charlottesville.

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THE RIVER ROAD.

Plan of the Company for Building a Railroad to the James River.

SPEECH OF H. C. PARSONS, ESQ., VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE RICHMOND AND ALLEGANY RAILROAD COMPANY, BEFORE THE COMMITTEES OF THE TWO HOUSES, THE ROAD TO BE A FIRST CLASS, AND TO BE BUILT ON THE CANAL ROUTE—THE PURPOSES OF THE COMPANY, DISCUSSED AND A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS CANDIDLY ANSWERED—INFORMATION FOR EVERYBODY INTERESTED IN THE CANAL OR PROPOSED RAILROAD—THE JOINT SESSIONS OF THE COMMITTEES DISCONTINUED AND REAL EARNST WORK NOW TO BE COMMENCED.

The Committees on Roads and Internal Navigation of the two houses of the General Assembly met in the hall of the House of Delegates yesterday evening—Senator W. H. F. Lee in the chair—for further consideration of the bill in relation to the transfer of the right of the canal to the James River and Kanawha Company to the Richmond and Alleghany Railroad Company. Nearly all the committees were present. Many citizens of Richmond—property-holders and business-men—occupied seats and gave close attention to the proceedings.

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the Committee.—In answering to your invitation, to explain as far as might be inconsistent the purpose and plan of the Richmond and Alleghany Railroad Company, I wish first to say that in the arrangement made with the James River and Kanawha Company each party undertook the one to build a railroad, the other to build a canal, and that the purpose of the canal legislation for this reason, and for the reason that those whom I represent felt that

THIS QUESTION WAS A BUSINESS ONE that more or less affected the people of the whole State, and of such a nature that our interest or pleasure would not and ought not to have any weight in its consideration. I was directed to avoid any word or act that might even have the seeming of a purpose to influence your action.

It is represented by the James River and Kanawha Company, that our position has been misunderstood; that it has indicated a lack of interest and purpose to press the project, and it is said that in a matter of such weighty import the members were entitled to all the information and argument we might have in its favor, for objectors are everywhere present. At your invitation, I will explain the position of the project, and return to-day

A LIST OF QUESTIONS that have been handed me, and I shall be glad to receive any others, presuming, of course, that all will recognize that I ought not to disclose any business details that do not concern the public, the disclosure of which might embarrass my company. I have abbreviated and arranged the questions as follows:

What are the relations of the Richmond and Alleghany to other State corporations?

What does it depend upon for revenue?

What does it intend to do with a canal?

What is its plan of building?

What will it do with the canal during construction?

What will it do with water-rents?

What will it do with bridges?

What will it do with the dams?

What will it do with the connections?

What will it do with the location?

What will it do with the well- or cheaply-built road?

What is the general purpose of projectors?

Does the company intend to mortgage its works heavily?

Does the company intend to encourage local developments, or simply to rest its first investments?

What object to amendments to the present bill? Is this a Richmond enterprise?

What about a Pittsburgh connection?

How will this road affect the Chesapeake and Ohio, and will it affect Norfolk?

How will it affect the canal?

Will it be a well- or cheaply-built road?

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